

**COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ**  
**PROBATION DEPARTMENT DESCRIPTION**  
**JUVENILE SERVICES**  
**INTERVIEWS JULY 20–21, 2000**

**Interview Process**

On-site interviews with seven stakeholder groups were conducted in Felton and Santa Cruz on July 20 and 21, 2000. The groups were divided into juvenile and adult services, except for the chief probation officer and senior staff and the county administrator's office staff, all of whom participated in both juvenile and adult services discussions. The seven stakeholder groups were as follows:

1. Judges and court administrators
2. Chief probation officer and senior staff
3. Line supervisors and probation officers
4. Prosecutors and defense attorneys
5. County administrators
6. Public community agencies
7. Private community agencies

A total of 45 people were interviewed. This number included 5 judges, 6 senior probation managers, 17 first-line supervisors and line staff, 11 public and private agency representatives, 4 prosecutors and defense attorneys, and 2 staff from the county administrator's office. The same questions were addressed by several of the stakeholder groups. Separate reports addressing juvenile and adult services have been prepared for Santa Cruz County. Although many of the answers in both reports are the same or similar, the questions were addressed separately by both juvenile and adult services stakeholders. In some instances, contradictory responses were given. These areas of contradiction are reported under the questions to which they pertain.

Prior to the on-site interviews, several actions occurred. Eighteen categories related to juvenile and adult services were developed. Each category included several questions specific to that topic. These questions were discussed, modified, and clarified at a meeting with representatives from the six counties selected to be part of this process. To accommodate the time frames of this project, participating counties were asked to address the questions in writing and to provide as much information as possible prior to the actual interviews. *This report combines all responses and does not specifically identify the part of the justice system reporting.* The 18 categories are as follows:

- I. Demographic Information
- II. Organizational Structure
- III. Department Mission and Objectives
- IV. Policies and Procedures
- V. Monitoring and Evaluation Process
- VI. Management Information Systems
- VII. Funding Sources
- VIII. Probation Services
- IX. Specialized Court Services
- X. Probation and Private Service Provider Partnerships
- XI. Staff Development and Training
- XII. Communication Systems
- XIII. Program or Service Gaps
- XIV. Partnership with Judiciary
- XV. Partnership with Prosecutors and Defense Attorneys
- XVI. Partnership with Other Collaborative County Departments
- XVII. Juvenile Probation Partnership with Education System
- XVIII. Strengths of Probation Department

## **SANTA CRUZ COUNTY**

### **JUVENILE SERVICES DESCRIPTION**

A total of 31 stakeholders addressed the questions related to juvenile services. The participant breakdown was as follows:

- Two judges
- Six senior managers
- Nine supervisors and probation officers
- Ten combined private and public community agencies
- Two prosecutors and defense attorneys
- Two representatives of the county administrator's office

#### **I. Demographic Information**

##### **A. Description of the county**

Santa Cruz is geographically the second smallest county in California, covering a total of 441 square miles. It is located on the central coast of California. About 417 square miles are in unincorporated areas, with 54 percent of the county's population living in those areas. Santa Cruz County represents about 1 percent of California's population and is considered mid-sized. The southern area of the county is almost exclusively Hispanic, and the county as a whole has a large Hispanic population. Fewer than 5 percent of the total population is African American or Asian.

The economy of Santa Cruz County is based primarily on agriculture and tourism. Technology is the largest growing sector. The county is described as conservative, with a slow-growth philosophy and an emphasis on environmental concerns. Housing is a major problem. The higher salaries that are offered in surrounding counties have resulted in a high rate of local government employee turnover.

## **B. Size of probation department**

As of July 2000, the probation department had 132 budgeted positions. This includes 12 administrative positions, 41.5 adult positions, 47.5 juvenile positions, and 31 juvenile hall positions. The staff breakdown for juvenile probation services follows:

- One division director
- One and a half assistant division directors
- Eight deputy probation officer IIIs
- Twenty-three deputy probation officer IIs
- Seven probation aides
- One administrative aide
- Six clerical support staff

## **C. Offender population, including types of offenses**

The annual workload ending June 30, 2000, included the following:

- |                           |       |
|---------------------------|-------|
| ▪ Police referrals        | 3,563 |
| ▪ Petitions filed         | 1,760 |
| ▪ Court reports completed | 206   |

The monthly workload included:

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| ▪ Minors supervised                    | 558 |
| ▪ Minors in placement                  | 25  |
| ▪ Minors in family preservation        | 45  |
| ▪ Minors at California Youth Authority | 36  |
| ▪ Minors in Redwoods                   | 18  |
| ▪ Minors at ranch/camp                 | 6   |

## **D. Juvenile hall staffing and population data**

The following is a breakdown of staff assigned to juvenile detention:

- One division director

- One assistant juvenile director
- Four institutional supervisors
- One senior group supervisors
- Seventeen group supervisors
- One typist clerk III
- One head cook
- One cook
- One food service worker
- One housekeeper

In fiscal year 2000, the average population in juvenile hall was 36.88. In fiscal year 1997, the average daily population was 49.13. Since that time, the population has decreased steadily. Over the past four years, the average daily population has dropped by 12.25, for a 25 percent decrease in detention confinement.

Santa Cruz does not operate any ranch facilities. The county contracts for ranch space with other counties and has an allocated budget item for this purpose.

## **II. Organizational Structure**

### **A. History of structure**

Separation of adult and juvenile services and juvenile hall enables focus on each function

### **B. Theory behind organizational structure**

- Lost some management positions at a time of diminishing resources
- Organizational structure remains in transition

### **C. Reporting lines of authority**

- Four layers of management:

- Chief
- Assistant chief (not budgeted)
- Assistant division director
- Manager
- Lines of authority consistent in juvenile and adult divisions
- Four layers of management is working effectively

**D. Discuss organizational structure strengths**

- Appears to be the appropriate levels of management staff

**E. Suggested organizational changes**

- Need to formalize supervisor position
- Need to formalize assistant chief position
- Need to include probation aid positions in safety retirement plan

**III. Department Mission and Objectives**

**A. Written department mission statement**

- There is a department mission statement that was recently updated
- Mission statement was part of a five-year plan developed in 1998

**B. Written juvenile services mission statements**

- Juvenile services, juvenile hall, and adult services use the same department mission statement

**C. Written annual objectives for juvenile services**

- There are no specific annual objectives
- Some specialized programs have annual objectives
- There are written objectives for grant programs

**D. Discuss staff involvement in the mission statement process**

- A cross-section of staff, including support staff, was involved in developing the five-year plan and mission statement

**E. Discuss how objectives are implemented within the department**

- There are no formalized specific annual objectives
- Objectives are developed for some specialized programs

**IV. Policies and Procedures**

**A. Does the department have a policies and procedures manual?**

**How often is it revised?**

- There is a comprehensive policies and procedures manual.
- The manual was completely revised in 2000
- The entire manual will be computerized by the end of 2000

**B. How are policies and procedures implemented?**

- Each employee has a hard-copy manual

**C. Describe the process used to prepare policies**

- An organizational task force approach is used
- All staff have an opportunity to review policies
- Manual is written by chief and assistant chief probation officers

**D. Describe staff input in policy development**

- Supervisors share with line staff
- Suggestions come from interested line staff

**E. Describe the process used to monitor policies and procedures**

- Accomplished through a computerized review of cases

**V. Monitoring and Evaluation Process**

**A. Describe the evaluation procedures for programs and services**

- Not all programs are evaluated
- All grant programs are evaluated

**B. Are evaluations designed on performance-based measures?**

- Evaluations are not designed on performance-based measures
- There is no designated evaluation staff
- Department is considering contracting for evaluation services

**C. Describe how monitoring and evaluation information is reported to the CPO**

- No process is in place

**D. Describe how this information is integrated into programs and services**

- Changes are brought to the management team
- Staff is comfortable discussing these issues with every level of the organization
- Line staff are involved in evaluating programs

**E. Describe how information from evaluations is integrated into management decisions**

- Management embraces the importance of evaluation data

**VI. Management Information Systems**

**A. Describe the current information system**

- Adult and juvenile systems are part of a county mainframe system
- Many consider the system a dinosaur
- Some dumb terminals are being used



- The department is in the process of downloading the mainframe for more flexibility
- Currently cannot access certain data and must request a program from the county
- All caseload entries are completed by computers
- Expect to have all department employees with personal computers by the end of 2000

**B. Assess the efficiency of the information system**

- Department is moving in the right direction
- There is good case management information for line staff
- The system cannot be used by management for data analysis
- Cannot get information from other counties
- The system is not integrated and requires multiple entries of information

**C. Describe how information needs are determined**

- Meetings with senior staff and managers
- Others give input through supervisors
- Information needs are prioritized
- Department committees meet to discuss needs
- A community justice task force addresses information needs
- There is some county funding for technology

**D. Does a users committee exist and what is the composition?**

- The committee is composed of department management and county juvenile information services groups
- No committee addressing adult issues

**E. Describe how the MIS interacts with other parts of the system**

- Limited access with other stakeholders

- KIDS database shared with mental health and child welfare tracks all youth in placement and placement alternatives
- Law enforcement information is accessed by appropriate county agencies
- Probation officers housed in police departments share information

**F. Discuss additional information needs**

- Ability to collect data from the mainframe
- Court officers need computerized capabilities to increase efficiency and speed up the paper-flow system
- Remote sites need information access
- Videoconferencing capabilities

**G. What are the computer equipment needs?**

- Personal computers for all staff
- Laptops for field visits

**VII. Funding Sources**

**A. What is the total budget (juvenile and adult breakdown)?**

- The total fiscal year 2001 budget for the Santa Cruz Probation Department is \$11,093,666:
  - Juvenile services budget is \$8, 390,160 (75.63%)
    - Of that total, juvenile hall costs are \$1,996,834 (24%)
  - Adult services budget is \$2,703,558 (24%)

**B. What are the major line items?**

- No information provided

**C. What are your various funding sources?**

- General fund           (38.25%)                               \$4,243,015
- TANF                   (9.29%)                                 \$1,030,059

▪ Title IV-E	(7.37%)	\$817,572
▪ Prop. 172	(21.18%)	\$2,349,560
▪ Grants	(15.76%)	\$1,747,846
▪ Fines/fees	(4.28%)	\$474,000
▪ Other revenue	(3.88%)	\$430,666

**D. Where are your greatest funding item deficits?**

- Low salaries, which result in turnover to other counties
- Need for overtime compensation
- Physical plant needs to address overcrowded office space
- Vehicles
- Supervisors who are not required to carry caseloads
- Need for court services and detention center capabilities in Watsonville
- Additional adult probation officers
- Renovation of juvenile hall
- More revenue in the ranch referral category
- Mental health services
- Drug treatment services
- Technology
- Specialized services for girls

**E. Level of CPO control over budget**

- Has control over department budget
- Participates in county board committees

**F. Large budget category comparisons for the past five years**

- FY 1997: \$6,171,449
- FY 1998: \$7,011,891
- FY 1999: \$8,353,028
- FY 2000: \$10,378,399
- FY 2001: \$11,093,718

There has been a 45 percent increase in the total budget revenue since fiscal year 1997. It is also interesting that the percentage of the budget coming from the general fund in fiscal year 2001 is 9 percent less than that budgeted in fiscal year 1997.

## **VIII. Probation Services**

### **A. Discuss the automated and validated needs/risk tools being used**

- The TANF programs in juvenile services use a case planning funding assessment
- Juvenile hall uses risk assessment that is instrumental in determining eligibility for detention alternatives

### **B. Describe any specialized assessment services you provide**

- Placement screening assessment tool is risk and strength based
- Risk assessment instrument for detention
- Assessment of needs, intake/juvenile hall
- Drug and alcohol and mental health assessments available for selected cases

### **C. What are the current probation supervision workload standards?**

- There are currently no workload standards
- There is no system of equal distribution of workloads among probation officers
- Specialized caseloads have maximum clients per officer

### **D. Describe how these workload standards are determined**

- No standards for juvenile workload

### **E. Describe the case plan process (supervision plan)**

- Much of the supervision plan is the result of oral dispositions

- This system prefers to operate on an informal basis
- Plans are supposed to be updated every six months, but this policy is not being implemented
- All placement and placement prevention wards have case plans or service plans updated every six months at minimum
- Specialized caseloads have detailed assessments
- Intake assessments need to be revisited
- More emphasis needs to be placed on development of assessment instruments

**F. Describe the continuum of services offered to probationers from least to most restrictive sanctions**

- Victim services
- Job developer
- Neighborhood accountability boards
- Youth Garden
- Probation internships
- SCPD juvenile diversion programs
- Assets (diversion grant)
- Intake
- Juvenile hall
- Home supervision
- Electronic monitoring program
- Court investigation
- Youth Community Restoration Program
- Watsonville Juvenile Community Court
- COPS More
- Regular supervision caseload
- City of Santa Cruz intensive caseload
- Broad-based apprehension, suppression, and treatment alternatives
- Family preservation
- Community-based day treatment and supervision centers

- Out-of-home residential placement and Redwoods Residential Treatment Center
- Comprehensive continuum of services

**G. Are there eligibility criteria for entering and exiting each program and service? Please describe.**

- None exist for the entire system
- Specialized programs are well defined
- Management team must approve ranch commitments
- Placement screening team must approve all out-of-home placements and family preservation

**H. What sanctions along the continuum are *not* available?**

- No residential drug treatment facility located within the county for girls
- After-school evening reporting centers
- Mental health inpatient facilities
- Need additional juvenile hall services for increasing number of mentally ill juveniles
- Increased victim services
- Need additional employment placement
- Vocational training (available for intensive service caseloads)
- Tutoring services (available for intensive service caseloads)

**I. Describe the role the judiciary plays in the intermediate sanctions system**

- Usual practice is for probation to determine the appropriate sanctions
- Judges question types of services needed
- Judges refine probation plans
- Judges set short reviews
- Judges help the probation staff stay consistent

**J. What role does the judiciary play in determining the types of supervision sanctions needed?**

- Limited involvement
- More judicial leadership would be welcome

**K. Are there any mandated sanctions?**

- None reported

**IX. Specialized Court Services**

**A. List the specialized programs in your county**

- Youth community court
- Truancy court
- Planning grant for a juvenile drug court

**B. Describe the relationship between these programs and probation**

- Good relationship with community agency that staffs community court

**X. Probation and Private Service Provider Partnerships**

**A. Describe the services private vendors provide to the probation department**

- Counseling services
- Wrap-around services
- Diversion services
- Anger management
- Health services
- Cultural sensitivity
- Electronic monitoring
- Job training
- Neighborhood accountability boards

- Case management
- Job training
- Gang intervention
- Community services
- Intensive supervision
- Day treatment services

**B. How does probation staff view these services or programs?**

- General view is very positive
- Excellent collaborative relationships

**XI. Staff Development and Training**

**A. Describe the specific training subjects offered to staff**

- Each new probation officer receives 240 hours of training from the state
- Each probation officer must have 40 hours of training annually
- Each new institutional group supervisor is required to take 200 hours of state-mandated training
- Each institution worker must take 24 hours of annual training
- Each new supervisor and manager takes 80 hours of required training
- Each employee goes through an in-house orientation program
- There is one full-time training officer who coordinates the department's training effort
- Training is offered using internal staff as instructors

**B. List the training courses that are mandatory**

- Several courses are mandatory but not on an annual basis
- CPR
- Cultural diversity
- Sexual harassment
- Strength-based assessments



- Officer safety
- Mandated programs change from year to year

**C. Describe how staff training needs are determined**

- Supervisors determine officer needs
- Staff makes specific training requests
- Some training is mandated outside of the department
- Supervisors discuss training needs jointly with officers

**D. Describe the process used to get staff input for training needs**

- Exchange of ideas from all levels of department

**E. Describe the types of cross-training taking place**

- Some within the department
- Staff recognizes a need for cross-training and welcomes opportunities

**F. Describe the management training being offered**

- Eighty-hour course after promotion to supervisor or manager
- There is limited training for supervisors
- Leadership training is provided for anyone who wishes to attend
- It would be helpful to offer management training prior to promotions

**XII. Communication Systems**

**A. Describe the department's staff meeting schedule**

- Meeting schedules are informal
- Unit meetings vary but are usually once a month
- Management meetings held every two to three weeks
- Division meetings held every two to three months
- Outlying offices meet less often
- Consensus that communication in the department is good

**B. Describe the process used to disseminate day-to-day information to line staff**

- E-mail
- Web site
- Written memoranda
- Management is very accessible
- Open and informal channels of communication

**XIII. Program or Service Gaps**

**A. Discuss the resources, services, or programs you need to provide a more effective probation service**

- Low salaries result in turnover to other counties
- Need for overtime compensation
- Physical plant needs to address overcrowded office space
- Vehicles
- Supervisors who are not required to carry caseloads
- Need for court services and detention center capabilities in Watsonville
- Additional adult probation officers
- Renovation of juvenile hall
- More revenue in the ranch referral category
- Mental health services
- Drug treatment services
- Technology
- Specialized services for girls

**B. Are any programs mandated?**

- Probation officers must use least-restrictive program
- Probation must monitor placements regularly
- Domestic violence has mandated services

#### **XIV. Partnership with Judiciary**

##### **A. What services does probation provide for the judiciary?**

- Court officers
- Full screenings
- Social studies
- Supervision
- Victim statements
- Detention facility
- Domestic violence services
- Discusses the continuum of sanctions
- Alternative placements to detention
- Court reviews
- Referrals to out-of-state placements
- Postdispositional plans

##### **B. Describe the relationship between the judiciary and the probation department**

- Court unit people are excellent and get the information judges need
- Probation officers are very professional
- Probation officers are very task oriented
- Probation officers have an excellent grasp of the technical aspects of the job
- Probation department believes there is an open-door policy with the judges
- Judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and probation describe an excellent working relationship
- All parties have mutual respect for each other
- Comfortable, informal relationship
- Probation officers are independent thinkers
- Probation includes prosecutors and defense attorneys as part of a team approach

**C. Describe the process used by probation and the judiciary to ensure that the judiciary has the broadest possible sentencing alternatives**

- Court units communicate with the judges and coordinate appropriate services
- Informal communication network

**D. What changes or enhancements are needed to improve this partnership?**

- More meetings with judiciary, prosecutor, and defense attorney
- Afternoon court time would assist probation
- Need for consistency in recommendations across the board
- Bring judges into the process of planning

**XV. Partnership with Prosecutors and Defense Attorneys**

**A. What are the points of interaction among probation, prosecutors, and public defenders?**

- Prosecutor refers police to probation
- Prosecutor and probation work together during the intake filing process
- Prosecutors assist in the interpretation of the law
- Prosecutor gives information to probation on disposition reports
- Prosecutor interacts with probation on juvenile reviews
- Prosecutor and probation interact at disposition hearings
- Prosecutor, defense, and probation sit on multi-agency task force
- Defense attorney and probation interact on placement evaluation
- Defense attorney and probation share police reports
- Defense attorney and probation work on calendar call
- All parties work on detention reform issues
- All parties work on victim witness issues
- All parties work on development of community court and NAB

**B. Describe the relationship among prosecutors, defense attorneys, and the probation department**

- All parties believe there is an excellent relationship
- Probation presents a balanced approach
- Administrators meet on a regular basis
- Prosecutor needs some clerical support
- There is a high level of trust among all parties
- Prosecutor needs more continuity of staff in the juvenile arena
- Defense attorney needs more staff

**C. Discuss the exchange of information among probation, prosecutors, and defense attorneys**

- Defense attorney and prosecutor get the same information
- Probation is the primary disseminator of information
- Probation shows no bias toward defense or prosecution
- There is an excellent informal information exchange
- Serve together on county task forces

**D. What changes or enhancements are needed to improve the partnership?**

- Defense attorney could be more prepared for court
- Geographic location serves as a hindrance
- Turnover of prosecutor and defense attorney staff presents an efficiency issue

**XVI. Partnership with Other Collaborative County Departments**

**A. What are the points of interaction with these departments?**

- Interaction occurs at every step of the continuum of the sanctions concept
- Restorative justice concept has all parties working in partnership

**B. Describe the relationship between probation and these departments**

- The relationship is described by all parties as outstanding

**C. Discuss the exchange of information between probation and these departments**

- Excellent
- All involved keep looking for ways to improve

**D. What changes or enhancements are needed to improve this collaborative relationship?**

- None given

**XVII. Juvenile Probation Partnership with Education System**

**A. Describe the relationship between the education system and the juvenile probation system**

- Work together on student attendance review boards
- Jointly involved in truancy mediation
- Involved in community court
- Jointly involved in a drug suppression in schools grant
- County education system operates the juvenile hall school program
- Partnership on the gang violence suppression program
- Outstanding relationship between juvenile hall and county education system

**B. What specialized programs or services are provided to juvenile probationers by the education system?**

- Drug suppression in schools program
- Partnership on day treatment center
- Joint program to reduce truancy
- Probation sits on truancy hearings

**C. Discuss the exchange of information between juvenile probation and the education system**

- Excellent exchange of information
- Good exchange of information at the day treatment center
- Share with probation pre- and post-testing information in the systems of care program
- Numerous memoranda of understanding between probation and education

## **XVIII. Strengths of Probation Department**

### **A. List and discuss the elements of the probation department services that you believe are outstanding or exceptional**

- Strong vision and mission
- Outstanding collaboration with community partners
- Department is open to community suggestions and involvement
- Detention reforms and alternatives are outstanding
- Department work on disproportionate minority confinement
- Innovative
- Strong department leadership
- Collaboration within the department is outstanding
- Proactive department
- Good fiscal management
- High-quality staff
- Almost half of staff is bilingual
- Department exhibits excellent cultural competency
- Outstanding juvenile continuum of services
- Probation officers located in police departments
- Very professional
- Trustworthy
- Receptive to alternatives to incarceration

## **Exemplary Practices and Programs**

The continuum of sanctions for juvenile offenders in Santa Cruz is comprehensive and innovative. The partnerships that exist between probation and public and private agencies are excellent examples of and witnesses to the value of having common goals for assisting troubled youth.

Innovative alternatives to incarceration have dramatically reduced the average daily population in the Santa Cruz Juvenile Hall. The average stay in juvenile hall of slightly more than nine days is excellent.

The leadership and outstanding quality of the probation staff were recognized and reported by all stakeholders in the system.



